

## LIGHTNING SAFETY

### **SUMMERTIME IS LIGHTNING SEASON ON THE NTS\***

**Lightning safety is easy. But lightning safety is also inconvenient. It requires diligence and continual reinforcement and encouragement. Lightning safety is a multi-step process, with each step providing a decreasing level of protection – plan around the weather, and have a lightning safety plan.**

### **No Place Outside is Safe Near Thunderstorms!**

#### Lightning Safety Actions

1. If you are planning to be outside, **CHECK THE NTS WEATHER FORECAST** via;

Telephone: **295-1255** (Duty Forecaster) or **295-1213** (recording)

Internet: <[www.sord.nv.doe.gov](http://www.sord.nv.doe.gov)>

Radio Net: **Sunshine 1** or **Sunshine 3**

2. Plan around the weather to avoid the lightning hazard.
3. If you are going to be outside anyway, stay near proper shelter and use the **'30-30 Rule'** to know when to seek proper shelter.

#### '30-30 Rule'

When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter promptly. Wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving shelter.

If you can't see the lightning and only hear thunder it is prudent to seek shelter quickly.

**SEE LIGHTNING SAFETY RULES & MYTHS BELOW**

### Proper Shelter:

The best shelter commonly available against lightning is a large fully enclosed substantially constructed building, e.g. your typical house. Substantially constructed means it has wiring and plumbing in the walls.

**Once inside**, stay away from any conducting path to the outside. Stay off the corded telephone. Stay away from electrical appliances, lighting, and electric sockets. Stay away from plumbing. Don't watch lightning from windows or doorways. Inner rooms are generally better.

If you can't get to a house, a vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable second choice. As with a house, avoid contact with conducting paths going outside:

Close the windows, lean away from the door, put your hands in your lap, don't touch the steering wheel, ignition, gear shifter, or radio. Convertibles, cars with fiberglass or plastic shells, and open framed vehicles don't count as lightning shelters.

### \*REMEMBER

**Lightning can occur year round; July and August are simply the most active months for thunderstorms and cloud-to-ground lightning on the NTS.**

#### HOW TO ESTIMATE THE DISTANCE TO A CLOUD-TO-GROUND LIGHTNING STRIKE

**SOUND TRAVELS AT APPROXIMATELY 1000 FT/SEC. THEREFORE, IF IT TAKES 5 SEC BETWEEN THE TIME A LIGHTNING BOLT IS SEEN STRIKING THE GROUND AND THUNDER IS HEARD; THE LIGHTNING STRUCK THE GROUND ROUGHLY 1 MILE AWAY.**

### **ALSO**

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**New composite materials are poor conductors of electricity**  
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## LIGHTNING SAFETY RULES

1. Go quickly inside a completely enclosed building, not a carport, open garage, covered patio, or an open window
2. If no enclosed building is convenient, get inside a hard-topped all-metal vehicle
3. **Do not take shelter under a tree.**
4. If there is no shelter, **avoid being the tallest object in the area.** If only isolated trees are nearby, crouch on the balls of your feet in the open, keeping twice as far away from a tree as it is tall.
5. Avoid leaning against vehicles. Get off bicycles and motorcycles
6. **Get out of the water...**off the beach, out of small boats or canoes. If in a boat, crouch down in center of the boat away from metal hardware. Avoid standing in puddles of water, even if wearing rubber boots.
7. Avoid open spaces, wire fences, metal clothes lines, exposed sheds and electrically conductive elevated objects
8. Do not use metal objects like golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets or tools
9. Do not work on fences, telephone or power lines, pipelines, or steel fabrications
10. Stop tractor work and heavy construction equipment, especially when pulling metal equipment, and dismount. Do not seek shelter under the equipment.
11. Avoid congregating in groups. Do not hold hands with others and space yourself several yards from one another.

**Becoming familiar with outdoor lightning safety rules can save your life or that of a loved one.**

## LIGHTNING MYTHS

**Myth:** If it is not raining, then there is no danger from lightning.

**Fact:** Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from the rainfall. In the desert, lightning frequently occurs without precipitation at the surface.

**Myth:** People struck by lightning carry an electrical charge and should not be touched.

**Fact:** Lightning-strike victims carry no electrical charge and should be attended immediately.

**Myth:** Lightning doesn't strike the same place twice.

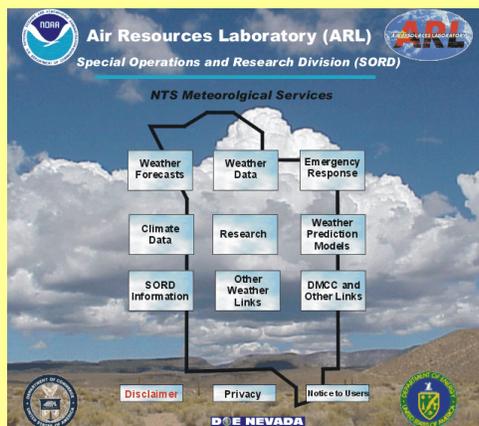
**Fact:** Not true. The Empire State Building is struck approximately 25 times per year.

**Myth:** Rubber tires from cars makes occupants safe from lightning.

**Fact:** Actually it is the metal skin of the car and jumps to the ground either through the air, along the wet tire surface, or by traveling through the tire (causing it to fail).

# WHERE TO VIEW NTS LIGHTNING PRODUCTS

## VISIT THE ARL/SORD WEBSITE



[www.sord.nv.doe.gov](http://www.sord.nv.doe.gov)

**Weather Data or Current Weather**

**Lightning - Select an Item**

**NTS Lightning**

**Lightning Graphics update every minute and animations update every 10 to 15 minutes**

- **CONTACT THE DUTY FORECASTER**

**295-1255**